

5/10/83

Something I haven't mentioned but has been growing on me over the past few months is that I'm not alone in my frustration here. With Jim leaving tomorrow (darn it) and having to assess his two years of work in Planning, I realized that the problems and frustrations differed between us only in intensity. But given the fact that his services were specifically requested, and mine were optional, those differences were not so great. The ambiguity, the indifference, the underutilization they were as much apart of his experience as they are of mine. His time here, although not wasted in the purest sense, still lacked a concreteness that we all (as expats in the public service) experience. Paul, who works with him and will be here until April, has similar feelings. Paul has a one-year contract and he was saying "If the last 6 months are like the first 6 months, I won't be staying". He has worked in Guyana for 2 years so the cultural aspects of living in the third world are nothing new to him. Yet, he finds himself useless here. Waiting for something to happen. I think it takes a rare, highly motivated person, to get into a situation here and be "successful". Those people, found among PCs, VSOs and other expats are few and far between and cause more anxiety rather than inspiration. Mostly because they trigger a round of "Why not me?" or "What's wrong with me?" questions. Going even further, Vincentions, especially young and well educated Vincentions, also feel unutilized and helpless to change things here. I recently got company here in my office. Randy Cato, M.S. in Pol. Sci. has been placed here as Asst. Secretary. When asked what he'll be doing in the Min of Finance he replied "Well, I haven't been assigned to anything yet. I'm just waiting for something to come about". It will be interesting to see if he actually does something or if he will merely spend his time reading Newsweek and Time as he does now. The incredible waste of Human Resources is at least appalling and gives one some sense as to why St Vincent continues to languish in the third world.



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